

A FUNERAL
SERMON
UPON THE
DEATH
OF
Mr. Thomas Clissold,

Who Departed this LIFE,
May 24. 1713.

In the 31st Year of his Age

By THOMAS REYNOLDS.

LONDON,
Printed by J. DARBY for J. LAURENCE
at the Angel in the Poultry, and N. CLARKE
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A FINE RAIL
St. George's

UPON THE

DEATH

OF

Mr. George Clegg

Who Departed this Life

May 13th 1783.

In the 31st Year of his Age

By Thomas Reynolds

London

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THE
Epistle Dedicatory.

TO

Mrs. *Mary Wilkinson*,
Mr. *Thomas Martin*,
Mrs. *Mary Grey*,
Mr. *William Higgs*,
Mrs. *Frances Higgs*;

With the Brother and Sisters of
the Deceas'd.

Christian Friends,

NOTHING would have induc'd
me to preach, and now to publish
the following Sermon, had I not
a Prospect of doing some good
by those Hints, which Mr. Clissold's Cir-

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circumstances have led me to mention, and which, for the sake of the present Generation, I should be glad were as publick as might be.

I H T

I have dedicated it to you, because of the Right you have all to it; and I do this as a Mark of my Respect, the Sincerity of which I know not how better to express, than in desiring you to regard the Voice of the present sad Providence, in the Death of our Friend, as directed in a more particular manner to you, and of which therefore you should each of you reckon your selves concern'd, to make the proper Improvements.

As to you, MADAM, that had rais'd in him an Excess of Joy (for so he spake of it when dying) from the Hope you had given of entring with him into the Bonds of Wedlock, and thereby making up the Loss he had sustain'd about eighteen Months since; it will be no Affront to your Modesty to suppose, on your part, a just degree of Respect, enkindled in your own Breast, towards him that had so great a one for you. This makes your Case exceeding compassionate.

Tours,

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Yours, I confess, is a decent Sorrow, for he was your Husband in Intention. You were preparing the Attire and Ornaments of a joyful Bride ; but, alas ! when all things were nigh ready for the Marriage-Solemnity, how has the Sovereign God, on a sudden, caus'd you to lay by your Attire, and to put on the Garb of a disconsolate Mourner, in taking from you, by an unexpected Stroke (if I may have leave to say so) the Desire of your Eyes.

Yet, methinks, those very Circumstances, which aggravate your Sorrow, should also serve to allay it. We are affected according to the Estimation we have of Things : But are those to be had in any vast Account by us, which, like a shadow, shall so suddenly vanish and disappear ? Some degree of Indifference at least should be shown to that, which you have by experience found to be so uncertain, so fading and mortal. And after all, you know, we must submit to the Will of God, and this we should do with all Dutifulness of Mind, as considering that he, that hath taken away any dear Comfort from us, can, if we quarrel with him, take us away too.

Tou

You cannot reverse what is past ; yet the Wisdom that is from above, will teach you to make your Gain of this Loss. He that has taken from you what had so much room in your Esteem and Affection, does offer you Himself. Let him have your whole Heart, that has an inviolable Claim to it, under all the Relations you do or may bear to any other. And if from your late Disappointment, you shall be induc'd to enter under the firmest Engagements to the Lord Jesus Christ, by presenting your self to him as a chaste Virgin, how suitable an Improvement will this be of your Affliction, and how great the Advantage !

But you are not alone in this Trouble ; for tho his Parents be dead, there yet remain an aged tender Grandfather above fourscore and four, with the afflicted Mother of his late Wife, an own Brother, and four Sisters, who cannot but partake with you in your Sorrows : Tho here I am oblig'd to say, that the very small Acquaintance I have with the two first, and my being an utter Stranger to all the rest, does render me, in a great degree, uncapable

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uncapable of saying what might be proper to them.

I can only advise those of them that have enter'd upon a good part of that which was gain'd by the hard Labour and Industry of another, that they diligently take care, on the one hand, they do not profusely lavish and mispend it, nor on the other, suffer their Hearts to be too much wedded and glev'd to it; but looking upon it as a Talent taken from him that got it, and put by God into their Hands, they improve it with Wisdom and Fear, to his Honour and Glory: For if otherwise, they may learn from their own Brother's Death, how easy it is for God to cut them short, and to make a new Transfer; so that what has unexpectedly fallen into their Hands, shall fall as unexpectedly into the Hands of others.

To conclude: I cannot, without Injustice, omit making mention of you his good Uncle and Aunt, my worthy Friends and Acquaintance. It was to you that (under God) our deceas'd Friend was oblig'd for the greatest

Blessing

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Blessing he had in his late Wife, your pious Niece, who some years before, as well as after the Death of that excellent Person her Grandmother, had a religious Education under your Care, and was at last dispos'd of by you in Marriage. And not only to this Blessing, but to your good Counsel and Advice, your assiduous Care, Assistance and Friendship, he did owe very much; so that it is not to be wonder'd at if he honour'd you as his Parents, and would do nothing of any moment without your Consultation, who in all Respects, both Temporal and Spiritual, had express'd a Tenderness and Concern for his Welfare equal to that of Parents.

The Loss you had first in your Niece, who dy'd under your Roof, and now what has befallen you again in such a dutiful and affectionate Nephew, whom you lov'd as your own, must have been an Affliction to you; but you that have both of you long walk'd in Christ, and adorn'd a religious Profession, that have had much Experience of a vain World and a good God, I am persua-ded know both how to behave your selves, and

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and where to go for Comfort under all the
Sicissitudes and Disappointments you meet
with in this transitory Life.

I have only to add, that as that Piety and
Fayre which appear'd in your Nephew and
Niece, was very much supported and che-
arb'd by your good Instructions and Exam-
ple; so it is to you more especially, that the
World is oblig'd for the Account that has
been formerly publish'd of the one, and is
now of the other. Your Characters are so
well known, that you alone are sufficient to
be my Vouchers for every thing I have
said; but besides this, I know I can have
the Attestation of many others, if it were
needful: and therefore as I have ventur'd
to preach and publish nothing material,
but upon a narrow Inquiry both for my
own and others Satisfaction, so I doubt not
I shall be supported under any Discoura-
gements I may meet with for what you know I
have faithfully deliver'd, according to the
strictest Truth. I doubt not your Prayers,
and am satisfy'd it will be one of the greatest
comforts under the Loss of those you so much
lov'd

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lov'd and valu'd, to find any good done
their Deaths. I am to you, and the re-
of you,

Your Sincere Friend and

Servant in Christ,

Peckham, June 19.

1713.



Thomas Reynolds

ECCLES. IX. 10.

hatsoever thy Hand findeth to do, do it with thy Might; for there is no Work, nor Device, nor Knowledg, nor Wisdom in the Grave, whither thou goest.

THE Funerals of Two of this Assembly within the last Week, might have led me to give you a Discourse at this time of Death; but I am oblig'd to do it, in answ're to a special Request, occasion'd by the surprizing Death of another much own and much lamented, I mean Mr. *Cliffold*. Tis needless to acquaint this Audience, how this pvice has unexpectedly fallen to me, which I d wish had been done by another worthy d. I shall only say, that there being several cumstances relating to the Deceas'd that are rmarkable, I thought it an Opportunity cast in my y, which, thro Divine Help, might be improv'd o I had short Warning) to very good purpose. d besides, having about a year and half ago as- ed you in improving the Death of that excel- ent Person Mrs. *Cliffold*, it made me the less un- willing, upon this sad occasion, to do the like for Husband.

In order to this, I could think of no Passage Scripture more pertinent, than that which I have read unto you.

The Words, I confess, do primarily refer the Comforts and Conveniences of this present Life; it being the Design of the Preacher to encourage Vigour and Diligence in our secular Businesses and Employments, with a free and cheerful, tho temperate, use of what our Industry with the Blessing of God, has procur'd us, from this Consideration, that *there is no Work, nor Labour, nor Knowledg, nor Wisdom in the Grave, neither we are all going.*

But then they are also applicable to the more important Concern of Religion, and by way of accommodation may with advantage be turn'd that, which, in answer to the present Providence design chiefly to insist upon. For if we ought lose no fair Opportunity that may make for the Advancement of our Temporal Happiness, doubtless we ought to lose none that may make for everlasting Interest and Welfare. And if the Consideration of Death should quicken our Industry with respect to the things of this Life, much more should it do the same with respect to those of another; for as to Importance, there is no Comparison to be made between them. With reference to the Concerns of another World, we have with the highest reason apply the Advice that is given by the Preacher, *Whatsoever thy Hand findeth to do, do it with thy Might;* for there is no Skill nor Knowledg, no Contrivance nor Art, no Work nor Labour that can, if we are in Circumstances, relieve and better them there.

All I design to say on this occasion, shall be reduc'd to these three General Heads of Observations.

- I. That we are all going to the Grave : *In the Grave, whither thou goest.*
- II. The present Life is the only Time we have to provide for our Souls. What is done in this respect, must be done now ; *for there is no Work nor Device, &c. in the Grave.*
- III. Therefore it is our greatest Duty, our highest Wisdom and Interest to do our utmost, in improving the present Opportunities God is pleas'd to afford us for our Salvation : *Whatsoever our Hand findeth to do, that we do it with our Might.* I begin with the

Ist. *We are all going to the Grave.* This is a Truth that needs no Arguments to establish it. I only mention it for this End, that it may be duly consider'd : for tho it be a Truth that is universally acknowledg'd, and there be none of more Weight and Importance ; yet scarce is there any that is less thought on, or laid to Heart.

Who does not know he must die ? But who is there converses with Death as he ought to do ? We generally *put this Evil far away from us.* Men either think not of it at all, as being too unpleasant and melancholy a Theme ; or if they do, they look upon it as a thing at a great distance from them, and a long while to come ; and therefore judg they shall have time enough hereafter, even many a year hence, to make Preparation for it.

Would many live as they do, act with so much Rashness and Folly, if they had Thoughts of Death as a thing at the door ? No, my Friends ; but this is the Mischief on't, they cherish a Presumption of long Life, tho upon no solid Reason or Foundation : And this unreasonable Presumption

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tion encourages them in many Liberties, which the Thoughts of Death as near, might be a powerful means to restrain them from. Thro a vain Confidence of Life, they run upon those very things, which oft-times hasten Death upon them. Wherefore it is probable (speaking according to the natural Course of Things) many would live much longer, were they possess'd that Death was nearer to them: For the Thoughts of this would have an Influence to make them more sober, more considerate, more careful and regular; all which have a natural Tendency to the prolonging of Life.

But most Men laying it with themselves as a Principle, that they shall live to the full Age of Man; that is, to Sixty, Seventy or Eighty Years: There are these dangerous Consequences which follow upon it; as that,

First, They wofully neglect what ought to be the main and principal Busines of Life, *viz.* the saving of their Souls, and making Provision for Eternity. Or,

Secondly, They do, upon this Prospect, give more freely into a Life of fleshly Indulgence and Pleasure; thinking the youthful Part of their Time to be no more a Temptation to Sin, than it is an Excuse for it. Or at least,

Thirdly, They drown themselves in the vast Hurries and Cares of worldly Enterprizes and Businesses.

All these Evils are owing to the Conceit and Imagination which Men are too generally apt to entertain of having time enough before them; tho by this means they commonly shorten their Days, and when Death comes, they are in a very bad Posture to leave the World. And Oh! what a Surprize

Surprise must it be to such Persons to be overtaken with Death, before they have made any Provision at all for it, but on the contrary were promising to themselves nothing other, than a long enjoyment of worldly Pleasure and Prosperity ! What a fearful Surprise and Disappointment must this be !

But one would think there is nothing should more effectually cure us of these Evils, and prevent these destructive Mischiefs, than the consideration of the vast multitudes that die long before they attain that Period of Time to which they hop'd to live. They who have expected to live to Fourscore, have many of them dy'd before they attain'd either the half or quarter part of that Age. The Word of God does not only testify to us the uncertainty of Life, but we have the sensible demonstrations of it in innumerable Examples (besides that which has given occasion to this Discourse) that are daily before our Eyes. And indeed, to one that lives to the full Age of Man, if a Computation were made, it will be found there are great Numbers who die before Forty.

There cannot therefore be a greater Evidence of wilful Deception, than that of a man's promising himself a long continuance in this World ; seeing the whole Race of Mankind may be fitly conceiv'd to resemble a large and spacious Tree that is fill'd with a vast and mighty Bloom ; but then the far greatest part of this withers and decays presently upon the first appearance, much of the other by sudden blasts or storms of Wind, and various other accidents is carried off : so that that which remains and arrives to maturity, bears no proportion to that which perish'd long before.

But

But be this how it will, it is most certain we are all going to the Grave, and they that live longest must die at last, and every day and hour is shortening our Time. The farther we remove from our Birth, the nearer are we coming to our Death. Life is a continual Flux: It is a running down into Death as the Atoms of Sand, that are running in the Glass; or as the Stream to the Ocean till it be swallow'd up of it. They that shall continue the longest Time, have but a few Years to live, many but a few Days, and some, it may be, but a few Hours or Moments.

I enlarge thus my Brethren, not as upon a thing you doubt of, but that I may detain your Thoughts and Meditations a little upon it. And Oh! that you would think of this matter, apply it to your selves, and lay it to Heart! The Aged should do it, because they know that in a short time they must die, there will be no avoiding it; and the Young should do it, because they may die before they are Old: And of all you young People, that now hear me, it is more probable by ten to one, you shall die young, than that you shall live to that extreme Age, you may be most of you apt to promise your selves. Let me therefore inculcate this matter upon you, and let me desire every one of you, not only the old but young, not only the Man of Sixty or Seventy, but the young Man of Twenty or Thirty; yea, the Youth and little Child; to think of the Grave whither you are going. But I come to the

11d. Observation: That as we are all going to the Grave and must die, *So the present Life is the only Time that's given us to provide for another.* For in this Case it is as true as in any; that there

is

is no Work, nor Device, nor Knowledg, nor Wisdom in the Grave. That is, when this Life is at an end, there is nothing we can be allow'd or suppos'd to do afterwards that will be of any Advantage to alter or better our Condition.

This short and uncertain Term of Life is the only Season we have to get Grace in, or to secure our interest in Christ and prepare for Heaven. God has allotted this for the time of our Probation, and hereafter is to be the time of Retribution. Now it is put to us whether we will repent of our Sins and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is our Day: Therefore, as the Apostle speaks, *Heb. 3. 15. To-day if ye will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts.* To Day either respects the present Life, or the present Time. We have no other Opportunity afforded of making our Peace with God through Jesus Christ, than what the present Life affords. And this is called to-Day, because of the shortness and uncertainty of Life, which for ought we know may be but for a Day or a very little while, so that we can be sure of no Time but the present.

And after this Life is expired, there is no season of Grace to be granted us in the other World. No Mercy will be offered, no Repentance accepted of. In this sense we must say, there is no Work, nor Device, nor Knowledg, nor Wisdom in the Grave. After Death our Work ceaseth, and then we are to receive our Wages; for then is the Judgment, *Heb. 9. 27. The Time to strive to enter in at the strait Gate,* is in this Life; for afterwards we are to be determin'd, either to a State of endless Happiness or Misery.

And then, if we would do any thing, it will not avail. Whatever Projects and Devices we might be

suppos'd to form, they will do us no good ; whatever Proposals we might make for our selves, they will signify nothing. God will not then frame a new Gospel for us. He will not send his Son to die again, or enter upon a new way and method of Salvation. As we cannot apprehend the great God to make more gracious Proposals to Sinners consistently with his Honour, than he has done ; so upon their refusal of them, it is not to be expected he shall enter upon any further Contrivances. This were to cast a Slur upon all he has already done. *How then shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation ?* Heb. 2. 3.

Either now we must obtain Mercy, or our Salvation will be impossible. *How shall we escape ?* that is, how can any imagine we shall ? It will be the most unreasonable thing in the World to expect it. Men will but delude themselves, to think or hope it. It is what will not be, cannot be, is impossible.

Well then, if you lose the Opportunity that is afforded in this Life, there is nothing to be done towards your Salvation in the next. There you are to receive your Reward or your Punishment. What is lost here, cannot be retrieved there. Your only Season is *now* in this Life, and for ought you know this present Season, while you are hearing, and I am speaking to you. If you will not hear God calling you *now* to his Grace and Mercy in Christ ; if you will not accept of the present Overtures, you may never hear him calling you more. If after all your other Refusals you shall add one more, he may take from you the Opportunity of accepting ; and seeing you *will none of his Counsel, but despise his Reproof*, Prov. 1. 30. the next Messenger

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fenger that shall be sent may not be a Minister of the Gospel, to offer you his Grace, but Death to summon you to his Tribunal. And this being so, it brings me to the

IIIId. And last Observation, *That therefore it is our greatest Duty, our highest Wisdom and Interest, to do our utmost, in improving the present Opportunities God is pleas'd to afford us for our Salvation. Whatsoever, relating to this, our Hand findeth to do, we ought to do it with our Might.*

When I say this, it is not that I would have you imagine, I suppose we have Strength or Ability of our own by Nature to convert our selves, or to act the Grace which is necessary for our Salvation; for *of our selves, and without Christ, we can do nothing,* 2 Cor. 3. 5. John 15. 5. but that as God, in dealing with his Creatures, does not deal with them as Stocks or Stones, but in a way agreeable to their rational Natures; and as he hath endow'd us with natural Powers, and does afford Men under the Gospel the Assistance of his common Grace, (which yet by the way, without the super-addition of his special Grace, cannot be available to Salvation) so that we exert the Power we have, be that what it will, and put forth our best Endeavours, imploring the Assistance of his special Grace, and having our whole dependance upon it, in the use of his appointed means, in order to obtain what is necessary to our Salvation. And in continuing so to do, we have encouraging Grounds to form an Expectation of Mercy.

Thus whatever God has instituted as a Means to obtain his Grace, and promote our Salvation, we are to take care we give our Attendance upon, and be found in the use of. Herein we are to act, so

far as we are able, as *rational Creatures*; hoping that God, in his due time, will, for Christ's sake, help us to act as *gracious Creatures*.

With this Explication, *my Brethren*, whatever our Hand findeth to do, we are to do it with our Might. Herein we are to lose no Season, no Opportunity or Advantage that presents it self. And certainly there is the highest reason for our closing with this Advice. For if, for ought I know, all that is most valuable to me (the Concern I mean of my precious Soul) may be at stake this Day or Hour; if in case I let slip this Opportunity, I may never have another; if I be found unready at Death, how much soever I may wish it, I shall not be able to recover an Inch of Time, no tho I had a whole World to give in purchase of it: Have I not reason, does it not infinitely concern me to do all I am able, to use my utmost Diligence and Labour in making the best use of my Time, both as to receiving and doing whatever may fit and prepare me for another World?

Why should I be so venturesome, to postpone my chief Busines to an uncertain Futurity? Why should I loiter, grow careless and negligent, from the hope of having Time and Opportunity hereafter; which Time I may not live to, and should I be catch'd before it comes, I am undone for ever.

Had I not better set about my main Work now? And will it not yield an unspeakable Satisfaction to me, when I shall have secur'd the principal Point, tho for the present it may cost me some Pain and Labour? That which must necessarily be done, is it not better to set about it now, than thro Sloth and Idlenes to put it off, till the Opportunity of doing it be quite lost and gone?

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People do not act so inconsiderately in Matters of infinitely less Importance. If a Man has an Opportunity of getting Wealth, promoting the Busines of his Calling, or advancing himself in the World (supposing him in his right Senses) he will not lose the favourable Juncture, nor grudg his Pains to obtain such a temporal Benefit and Advantage. And why should I be indifferent only about the Salvation of my Soul? What reason is there I should be so eager and indefatigable in other things, but so careless and slothful about an Affair of the greatest Consequence, even the One thing needful? Shall Men put forth their whole Strength and Might to gain this World, and is there not equal, yea infinitely greater reason they should do the same to gain Heaven and Eternal Life? For as our Lord himself spoke, *Mat. 16. 26. What will it profit a Man, if he gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? Or what shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul?*

Whatever then our Hand findeth to do, in order to serve our best Interest; whatever Occasions and Opportunities present for promoting our everlasting Happiness and Salvation, it is our highest Duty, Wisdom and Interest, to imbrace and improve them. Having spoken to the Observations that offer themselves from the Words, that which remains is what I chiefly intend, and this is,

The APPLICATION.

1st. In some Reflections upon the Words, taken in their primary and immediate Sense. And, *2dly.* As taken in the Sense to which we have accommodated them.

The

The Words, in their immediate Sense, do refer, as has been said, to the present Conveniences and Comforts of Life: And so the Reflections they lead us to make, are such as these. As,

1. *That Diligence in Mens lawful Callings, in order to their temporal Comfort and Benefit, is not only allowable, but very commendable, nay their Duty.* Whatsoever thy Hand findeth to do (that is, in thy Secular Concerns and Affairs, as is plain from the Context) do it with thy Might; *i. e.* let slip no fair Opportunities which present for thy Advantage, use the Abilities that God has given thee; and whatever thou appliest thy self unto, do it with unwearied Diligence, and Vigour, and Expedition. We have in the New Testament Directions to the same purpose, recommending the same things unto us: As that we *study to do our own Business*, 1 Thess. 4. 11, 12. *i. e.* to be so engag'd in it, as not to have Time or Leisure needlessly to pry and meddle with other Peoples Affairs, or be troublesom to our Neighbour. That we *work with our Hands*, so as by our own Labour and Industry to procure to our selves such Supplies as we want, and to have *lack of nothing*. On the other hand, we find Idleness and Sloth inveigh'd against, in the Word of God, as most hateful Evils, and as the Source and Spring of the worst of Mischiefs; and if the Time would allow, it were easy to demonstrate them to be so.

Laborious Diligence and Industry in our worldly Concerns, is what People should be found in the practice of; this being the way in which they have reason to expect the Blessing of God: Prov. 10. 4. *The Hand of the Diligent maketh rich.* And indeed now is the Time both to acquire

uire the Comforts of this World, and to enjoy them; for in the other, whither we are going, there will be quite a different way of subsisting.

But as from such Considerations as these we may quicken Men to Industry and Diligence, yet it ought to be in conjunction with these Limitations and Cautions, *viz.* that both the Callings they ingage in, and Means and Methods they observe in following of them, be such as are lawful: For to be ingag'd in an unlawful Busines, or to pursue a lawful Calling by indirect and unlawful Methods and Practices, can never be attended with the Blessing of God; but, on the contrary, must certainly draw down his heavy Curse upon us.

And then again, it ought to be with this Caution also, that we manage all our worldly Affairs in subordination to the main Concern and Design of Religion. For to pursue the Businesses of this World in such a manner, as to neglect our Interests in another, is a great Sin, as well as prodigious Folly and Madness. It is true, in prosecuting our secular Employments, we are directed in whatsoever our Hand findeth to do, to do it with our Might: but then this is in the proper Time and Place which God has assign'd for it, but not so as if this were to engross all our Time and Thoughts, and God were to have no part of our Time and Service: Far from it! This were to invert the Order of Things, and to make Religion give place to the World; whereas all things are to give place to that, and to be done and follow'd in subserviency to it.

And this now naturally leads me, as well as it lays me under some Obligation, to do Justice to the Character of our deceas'd Friend; tho' were it merely for his Commendation, I should not mention

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mention it; but I do it for an Example of Initiation. And I am glad I have such an Instance to produce; in order to confront the Pretences and Excuses of many idle People on the one hand; and careless Professors on the other.

I believe that all who knew him will allow me to say, a greater Pattern of Diligence and Industry in Business, is rarely to be found; and the World could not but take notice how God prosper'd him accordingly. I have been inform'd that in the House where this Person liv'd, it had been observ'd for a Course of many years, that those several had successively traded in it; yet not one prosper'd. This has made the Blessing of God's Providence the more remarkable upon this Man; which should teach young Beginners, and such as are setting out in the World, the good Effect and Consequence of honest Industry: and this might remove the ridiculous Conceit of many People concerning some Houses, as tho they were not lucky; whereas the Unluckiness of Houses, I fear, is chiefly owing to the unlucky Temper of the Inhabitants, who are idle and negligent, vicious and wicked, and do not take those Methods as are necessary to advance their Prosperity, and secure the Blessing of God.

But that which I have principally to remark under this Head concerning our Friend, and is what I am well assur'd of, is this; That tho' few or none did exceed him in Labour and Diligence, yet under all this he had a conscientious regard to the Honour of God, by keeping up Religion in his Family. The nature of his Business was such, as requir'd the whole Family to be very early at it in the morning, and to continue late at night; and such were his Hurries in providing for others,

others, as very often he did not allow himself Time sedately to sit down and eat his own necessary Food. Herein I will not wholly excuse him of blame, yet I must say in his Vindication, that notwithstanding this he took care that God was duly worship'd and serv'd by him and his House. Prayer was daily offer'd up in his Family, and that both Morning and Night. He very rarely omitted to perform this part with his Servants himself, and took care to have it done by a grave and serious person, when he was necessarily absent.

I am pleas'd in mentioning this, chiefly upon this Account, that it gives me the Opportunity to confront those, who pretend the Hurries of Business for the neglect of Family-Duty, or at least think it a sufficient Excuse for the seldom performing of it. The Example I set before you had as plausible a Pretence in this respect, as any, or at least as most of you, and yet he could not satisfy his Conscience with it. And, *my Brethren*, how can any of you imagine *that* will be a sufficient Plea in the Sight of God for the neglect of our Duty, which is so plainly confuted by the practice of one of your Fellow-Christians, who appear'd to be in as great a Croud of Business, as, I am persuad'd, most of you can pretend to?

Never let this then be admitted as an Excuse for your Neglects and Omissions. Better be without all that Business, which defrauds you of the time which you necessarily owe to God, and the interest of your Souls. If you are in never such Hurries, yet you can step aside to speak a few words to a Friend upon earnest Business, and then return to your Work again; and why can you not step aside from the World, and spare a little time every day to speak with God, with whom

whom you have the greatest Concern and Business? But,

2ly. Another Reflection I would make upon the words, in the sense they immediately refer to, is this, That it is not only lawful, under the Restrictions and Cautions that have been given, to use a vigorous Diligence in getting, but to take *Comfort in enjoying what our honest Industry has procur'd us.*

This is particularly recommended in the Verses before the Text, and the Text is brought in as a further Argument to enforce it: Ver. 7. *Eat thy Bread with Joy, and drink thy Wine with a merry Heart*; i. e. cheerfully and thankfully enjoy thy Comforts, avoiding all distracting Care and Grief for the Occurrences of this World. *Let thy Garments be always white, and let thy Head lack no Ointment*: by this he understands a cheerful and pleasant Conversation, especially in times of Tranquillity and Prosperity. Again, Ver. 9. *Live joyfully with thy Wife whom thou lovest all the days of the Life of thy Vanity, for that is thy Portion in this Life, and in thy Labour which thou takest under the Sun*; q. d. Thou canst reap no other Fruit of all thy Toil in this Life, but to take an innocent Pleasure, with Tranquillity of Mind, in such good things as the Providence of God bestowes upon thee. And then he further enforces this in my Text, from the Consideration of our Mortality, not as the Sensualist and Epicure, but so as always to observe the Bounds of Virtue and Moderation. We are allow'd with Freedom and Cheerfulness to enjoy our Comforts, so far as is consistent with our Duty, and conducing to our Health. Nay, it is expected we serve him with Joyfulness and Gladness of Heart, for the abundance

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lance of all things, Deut. 28. 47, 48. and for not doing so, he threaten'd the Jews to make them serve their Enemies in Hunger, and in Thirst, and in Nakedness, and in want of all Things.

But beside the innocent Enjoyment we should take our selves in these things, it should be one of our greatest Pleasures by these to be communicative and doing good to others. And as to this last (which I may say is the chief Delight of a *generous* Christian) our Friend did taste the Sweet of what God had bless'd him with. I shall not speak what I might do under this Particular, tho I could say a great deal: But as to the partaking much himself of these outward Blessings, such was the multiplicity and hurry of his Employment, as gave him little Time or Opportunity for it. But, *2dly.* I come to apply these words more especiallly in the Sense to which they have been accommodated. And,

1. From the first general Observation, *viz.* *That we are all going to the Grave,* we may make the following Reflections. As,

(1.) *How great is the Evil of Sin!* seeing it is this which hath brought Death into the World: Rom. 5. 12. *For Sin entering into the World, and Death by Sin, Death is pass'd upon all Men, for that all have sin'd.* And as the Thoughts of Death cannot but very much allay the Comfort we would propose to take in those good things, which, by God's Blessing upon our Industry, we have gotten; so whatever be the Comfort we have in these things, we may be sure that Death in a little while will wholly deprive us of it: Die we must. And now I am speaking of this, I must put you in mind of what the Scriptures mention concerning *the first and second Death,* Rev. 2. 11. & ch. 20. 6.

By the second Death we are to understand eternal Death, the Soul's everlasting Separation from God; which will be the Lot and Portion of the Wicked. From this Death all true Believers in Christ shall be deliver'd.

But as to the first Death, that is, temporal Death, which consists in the Soul's Separation from the Body, and the Dissolution of this outward Frame and Tabernacle; *it is appointed* or laid up for all, both good and bad, *Heb. 9. 27.* We must all die the first Death, or be *chang'd*, *1 Cor. 15. 51.* Death will one day find us out, when there will be no running away from it. This Part of the Punishment of Sin we shall all suffer, even the Righteous as well as the Unrighteous. The Sentence is pass'd upon us, and we are every day going to execution. Some are allow'd a longer, and others a shorter way to it; but all are drawing nearer and nearer every Day and Hour.

This is a Debt that Sin has laid us under a necessity of paying. We have sin'd, and therefore we must die. We must, I say, all of us die the first Death, God grant we may not fall under the power of the second too. Temporal Death is very terrible, but what will eternal be! This is the Desert of our Sins as well as the other, and what we shall infallibly suffer, if we don't take care to make our Peace with God, *thro Faith in Jesus Christ, and Repentance from dead Works.* How great then is the Evil of Sin that has expos'd us to all this!

(2.) Are we going, and I may say going apace, to the Grave? *This ought to restrain us from all Excess of Affection to the things of this World.* Not that I would dissuade you from taking any Comfort at all in present things, out of an Apprehension

prehension of Death ; no, *my Brethren*, this were to make Life miserable. It is, as I have shewn, allow'd, and is what God expects in return of the Mercies he has bestow'd upon you, that you receive them with Thankfulness at his hands, and chearfully enjoy them. But then we should so moderate our Love to, and Delight in these things, as to be prepar'd and ready to leave them, whenever Death shall come and call us away from them, and to part with them at no great Pain and Difficulty. When we are in the midst of our Enjoyments, and surrounded with all the Comforts of Life, and have the most advantageous Prospect of worldly Happiness, we should then consider with our selves, that if God should see fit to show in us the Vanity of worldly Prosperity, now is the most proper time to remove us ; and if he should do so, it would not be an unprecedented Case, for that he hath given many such Instances of the like nature heretofore. And indeed we have now such an Instance before us in the deceas'd. It is fit to be taken notice of, and ought to make an Impression upon us.

He was one that God had very signally prosper'd ; I may say, in such a manner, as all the City took notice of it. The World was pour'd in upon him faster than he was able to receive it. His Shop was almost always full of Customers, and sometimes crowded about the Doors : Few, I believe, if any, in that way of Businels, have had that Success from so small a beginning in so short a Space of Time ; besides this (so far as I am able to learn) he had a fair Reputation, and was generally well respected. His Industry and Character recommended him to a Family, where he was like to have match'd with a Person he thought every

every way suitable to him, besides the Increase to be made to his Substance, by the addition of a considerable Fortune. Again, over and above all this, which was so promising, he was a young Man, having but just finish'd the Thirtieth Year of his Age, a healthy Person ; so that the hope of a growing Prosperity, and a long Enjoyment, might have added to the Pleasure of his Prospects. But as he was just laying his Hands upon all this Happiness, Death comes behind and plucks him away, and by a Fever, in eight days time, cast this Person down, whom every body look'd upon as a rising Man, into the dark and silent Grave. So that if he had not taken care of a better Inheritance in another World, he that every body was ready to esteem happy, must have been a most miserable Man. For as to the present Comforts of Life, he had not time as yet to enjoy them ; but whilst he was carry'd on with the hope of something that would come at last, his Life, in the mean while, was nothing but Labour and Travel, and even that Hope at last disappointed by the Stroke of Death.

And now should not such an Instance as this affect and teach us ? O how vain a thing is Man ! How vain is all the Happiness of this World ! How does the Uncertainty and Fickleness of Life stain the Glory of all this World's Beauty, and lower the Price of its Comforts and Prosperity ! To what purpose should we set our Hearts upon these things, when, alas ! after the fairest Hopes, we may never come to enjoy them ; or if we do, yet may by Death be so suddenly and unexpectedly snatch'd away from them ? Should not such Considerations and Examples as these teach us to moderate our Affections towards worldly things ? Surely this

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is one of the chief Lessons this sad Providence should teach us all, and particularly those that were of his Neighbourhood and Acquaintance; God grant we may be all so wise as to learn Instruction from it. But,

(3.) Seeing we are all hastening to the Grave, let us be often thinking of Death before it comes; and let us so act and live, as that when it does come, it may be no Surprize to us. Pray therefore every day, converse every day, manage your Businesses and Employments every day in such manner as those who know they must die, and that for ought they know in a very short time: That when Death shall come, you may not think strange at it, but may submit to it with Stedfastness and Comfort, as a thing you have been long preparing for; and may be able to say, it is not come before I expected it, or before I had set my House in order. O what an Advantage will this be to us! How will it abate the Surprize and Terror of Death! nor shall we hereby die one moment sooner, but certainly much more sedately and comfortably. To a Man that has been all his days familiarizing to himself the Thoughts of Death, *See Sherlock upon Death.* dying will be but like the putting off his Clothes at night, in order to lay himself down in a sweet Bed of Rest after a hard day's Labour; such a one, when dying, will say, he is but going to undress, to be *uncloth'd* (as the Apostle expresses it, 2 Cor. 5. 4.) that he may be *cloth'd* upon, that Mortality may be *swallow'd up of Life.* Or to one that is prepar'd, dying is but like a Man's going out of an old and totter'd Dwelling, into a more agreeable and commodious Habitation: It is but leaving the earthly House of this *Tabernacle,*

*Tabernacle, to have a Building of God, an House
not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens,*

2 Cor. 5. 1.

Seeing then we must all die, and are all hastening to the Grave, let this moderate, I say, our Affections to the things of this present World, and may it engage us to think much of Death, and prepare for it before it comes. And so much for the Use we should make of the first Observation.

As for the

Second, *viz.* *That the present Life is the only Time we have to provide for our Souls;* the Use I would make of this, is,

1. To convince you of the Sin and Folly of Mens procrastinating their Repentance and Conversion, till it becomes the last thing of their Life. When they have an important Affair to mind, how absurd is it to put this off to the last thing they will do, whilst they play or loiter away all that time, which affords them the fittest Opportunity to do it in. Since the present time is the best Season we have to provide for our Souls, surely we ought not to let it slip. There are many Considerations which should induce us hereto. For,

(1.) To repent and turn to God, is the chief Business we have in Life. There is none like it. This is of principal Concern to us, and therefore what ought in the first place to be thought on and dispatch'd.

(2.) Till this be done, all the time we live in the World will be mispent Time, we shall do nothing that is really of any Value or Consideration. Our Time will be lost, we shall live to no purpose, unless it be a bad one; and whilst it is thus, it were better not to have liv'd at all: For what is that Life good for, that answers not its

End;

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End; nay, is employ'd to an End quite contrary to that it was design'd for?

(3.) Consider how sad and deplorable that Man's Condition must needs be, that has defer'd his Repentance to a Death-Bed: For then it is to be fear'd he has lost his Opportunity, and tho he never-so-much wish he had repented and made his Peace with God, it will signify nothing. And tho he pray with never such earnest Intreaties, that God would spare him, and give him a little longer time, it shall not be granted. His fix'd Time is come, and die he must.

Again, how much Sorrow soever such a one may seem to express for the Sins and Miscarriages of his past Life, how good Promises and Resolutions soever he may make of becoming a reform'd Man, and a serious Christian; how can he or his Friends know that herein he is sincere, since God will allow him no time to give any Proof or Evidence of it.

Add to this, how poor and cold the best Comfort must be which a Minister can afford to a dying Man, that has liv'd all his days in Sin and Estrangement from God, and put off that to the last Period and Moment of Life, which should have been the chief Business of his whole Life?

And then once more, what Confusion must the poor Man be in from his own Reflections (if he has his Senses) upon his mispent Life; from the Sense he may have of his Guilt, and the terrible Wrath he has deserv'd; from the very few Moments he has now to prepare for Eternity; from the Doubts and Fears that will unavoidably spring up in his Mind, whether God will accept him, or whether the Concern he expresses be not from a natural Dread of Wrath and everlasting Punishment,

ment, rather than a Principle of saving Grace?

Oh what Difficulties must the Man be embarrass'd with, that has his great Work to do just as he lies a dying ! His Suspitions and Frights, together with the shortness of his time, the Pains and Disorders attending his Sickness, besides many other afflicting Circumstances, must so incommodate them, and put him into such Distress and Confusion, as no one but must think this the unfitness time of all a Man's Life, to manage such a Business as that of the Salvation of his Soul. How great then is the Folly of those that defer their Repentance to a Death-Bed ? But,

2. *Let us then all examine our selves now we have time, how matters stand between God and our Souls.* Let us bless God we are not reduc'd to those desperate straits as many Thousands have been. Oh what would some have given upon a Death-Bed for a little time, for a few Weeks and Days ; nay, tho it were but so little a Space of Time as to make one serious Prayer more, or to receive a little further Information and Instruction ! Bless God you are not reduc'd to such a hard pinch as this !

Let the Examples of others be a Warning to you ; bless God you have the Means of Grace still continu'd, and many precious Helps afforded you ; bless him that you are at present in Health, and have some time in your hands, tho how short you know not.

Oh improve it whilst you have it ! Let the Death of this Person be improv'd by you into a serious Preparation for your own Death. *Be ye also ready, for in such an Hour as you think not the Son of Man cometh.* Death will come as a Thief in the Night, silently and suddenly : *And know*

know this (saith our Lord, *Mat. 23. 43, 44.*) that if the good Man of the House had known in what Watch the Thief would come, he would have watch'd, and would not have suffer'd his House to be broken up. Death will break up your House e'er you are aware, see then that you prepare and make ready. But I proceed to the

Third and last Observation, *That it is our Duty, Wisdom, and Interest to do our utmost, in improving the Opportunities God is pleas'd to afford us for our Salvation.* That herein whatsoever our Hand findeth to do, we do it with our Might: For as you have been told, there is no Work, nor Device, nor Wisdom in the Grave, whither thou best. I would exhort you then,

To prize highly the present Opportunities of Grace, which it hath pleas'd God to afford you:

To improve them; be not indifferent about them; pray, hear, read, meditate, receive, attend upon Ordinances with all your Might:

To live up to the means of Grace you enjoy: Let your Conversation be agreeable to your Profession: And,

Lastly, To imitate what you see good in your fellow-Christians, and to avoid what you see defective in them. And with respect to the Dead, let me desire you to imitate him;

i. In Diligence in your daily Callings and Employments. Idleness and Sloth, want of Diligence and Industry, have ruin'd not only many a Person, but many a Family, that otherwise might have liv'd comfortably and in good Reputation; and by their Industry in such a trading and populous City as this, might have gain'd considerably, so as to have prov'd not only great Blessings

36. Mr. THOMAS CLISSOLD's

sings to their Families, but have been in a Condition of doing good Service to the Publick.

2. In the conscientious, due and diligent Discharge of Family-Duties. That this be observ'd not only one Day in the Week, but every Day; and not only one, but both parts of the Day. Oh how often have I press'd this!

3. In the special regard he had to the Sanctification of the Lord's-Day. Here I must observe to you, that how laborious soever he and his Servants were in the Week, he took care they should do no servile Work on the Lord's-Day; And therefore that all might have that Day intire to themselves, he would not suffer his Ovens to be heated, nor would bake so much as for his own Family; but what was necessary for them, he us'd on that day to have it done abroad.

Besides this, he took care that none of his Goods were sold or deliver'd out on that day, unles he had reason to believe it was in Cases of Necessity. This he began with from the first, and held it on. I wish those People would observe this, that pretend the fear of disobliging their Customers, and especially those of this Trade, who set their Goods at their Doors (as I have my self observ'd since the preaching of this Sermon) and instead of denying, do what they can to tempt People to buy on the Lord's-Day.

And, Oh! that you would imitate him in the special Care he took of his Servants on this Day, by repeating the Sermons, examining them about what they heard, instructing them in the Principles of the Christian Doctrine by catechizing, and in praying with them, and taking care, if absent (which was but a very few times) to leave one to perform the same in his place.

4. Imitate him in submitting to faithful Christ's Reproof. When told of something that seem'd so agreeable to his former Diligence, of his being, as it was thought, oftner than heretofore a publick House ; after he had offer'd what any would have judg'd a sufficient Vindication, however told them, that for the future he would give them no such cause of Reprehension.

5. To conclude ; whatever was defective in him (as who is without his Failings) remember he is a Man, and sanctify'd but in part, and do you deavour to avoid it. I come therefore to the last thing, and that is,

An Account of his Death.

This I have had in writing from a Relative that tended him in his Sickness, which I here give almost word for word.

From his first taking ill, he had an Apprehension of Death. He said, he did not know what was to die ; but if his Work were done, he had rather die than live, for this had been a hurting troublsom World to him, in which he had found such Snares and Temptations, as made him desire, if it so pleas'd God, he might die in this sickness.

He call'd over the Sins of his Life with great brief and Agony of Soul, with bitter Sighs and Tears, confessing them to God, and begging Parson thro the Merit of the Blood of Jesus Christ, in whom alone he believ'd.

He confess'd his Sins to others, whom he thought might be influenc'd by his Example. The things he particularly confess'd and bewail'd with

with much Grief, were his Passion at his Servants, the leaving his Family on a Lord's-Day, which he never did but three tithes (and not then without a grave Person in his room to officiate for him) and said, if he liv'd, he would never do the like again * ; his spending too much time in minding the World, and too little in serving God : And crying out, he said, Lord help me for Jesus sake, the Evil in the Heart of Man is great.

He call'd his Servants two by two at a time, and told them he should die, and as a dying Master he charg'd them to follow what they had seen good in him, and what they had seen bad to avoid; and confessing his Sin of Passion to them, he desir'd them to pray for him.

He said in his Sicknes his State was safe, tho his Frame was bad ; for time was, in which he was sure the Spirit of God did witness with his Spirit that he was his. Then he would often cry out with grievous Sighs, Oh that ever I should sin against so good a God, as has been so kind to me !

He said, if he desir'd Life for any thing here it was to suffer for Christ's sake, which he counted the greatest Honour ; yet not without fear, lest he should be unable to stand in the day of Trial and dishonour God.

It was part of his Death-Bed Trouble, that he had taken so much Satisfaction and Joy in the Prospect of that Comfort he hop'd to have, in being yok'd to a suitable Person ; had he liv'd a little time longer, that Matter had been consummated.

* He promis'd the Person, to whom he was engag'd, to keep her a Country-Lodging, but then design'd to be in Town with his Family on the Lord's-Day.

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All the while he was engaging in that Affair, he had a secret Whispering and Presage of Death, which accordingly came and prevented him of his design.

When dying, notwithstanding the comfortable prospect he had form'd, he said, he could gladly leave all, and they were as nothing to him, compar'd with Jesus Christ, and to be with him. The last words of Scripture he was heard to speak, were, *I go to my Father, and your Father, to my God, and your God.*

Thus we have good reason to hope that Death is his Gain, but the Loss is ours: A Loss to the particular Person to whom he had devoted so much of his Affection, whose Case I cannot think of without Pity; I pray God support her: A Loss to his Family, to the Church, to the City, and to his Friends. The best way to have it made up, to learn those Instructions which this sad Providence should teach, and do these things which it would excite and quicken us to observe.

F I N I S.

CRITICAL

E R R A T A.

Pag. 11. lin. 10. for done read undertaken.

In a few Days will be Publish'd,

A Funeral Sermon on the Death of Mrs. Eleanor Warden, who departed this Life, May 31. 1713. Preach'd the 7. being Sacrament-Day, and apply'd also to that Eternity. By Thomas Reynolds. Printed for J. Law at the Angel in the Poultry.

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